GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3819
ANSWERED ON:22.12.2015
Population of Forest Dwellers
Rajoria Dr. Manoj

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) the total forest area in the country;
(b) the details of villages dependent on forest or located on forest fringes and total population of such villages;
(c) the total value of forest produce enjoyed by the said villages; and
(d) the details of steps taken by the Government to support these population and protect the forest area ?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) & (b) As per India State of Forest Report 2015, the total Recorded Forest Area of the country is 7, 64,566 square kilometers. As per National Forest Commission Report 2006, there is population of four crores living in 1.73 lakhs villages in or around the forest.

(c) People living in and around these forest fringe villages depend upon forest for a variety of goods and services. These includes collection of edible fruits, flowers, tubers, roots and leaves for food and medicines, firewood for cooking (some also sale in the market), materials for agricultural implements, house construction and fencing, fodder) for livestock etc. The value of these produce village wise is not maintained at the Ministry level.

(d) The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change is implementing National Afforestation Programme for sustainable development and management of forest resources in the country. The purpose of the scheme is rehabilitation of degraded forest and other areas by institutionalizing decentralized/participatory forest management and supplementing livelihoods improvement processes. The local communities living in and around in these forest fringe villages are involved in protection and regeneration of forest areas. Scheme is being implemented by a three-tier institutional set up, namely State Forest Development Agency (SFDA) at the State/UT level, Forest Development Agencies (FDAs) at the forest division level, and Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) or Eco-development Committees (EDCs) at the village level. The forest produce is shared with the communities as per the guidelines issued by respective State Governments.

Further, as a measure of social safety for Minor Forest Produce gatherers who are primarily members of scheduled tribes, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs launched a Centrally Sponsored Scheme namely "Mechanism for Marketing of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) through Minimum Support Price (MSP) and Development of Value Chain for MFP" from the year 2013-14 onwards. The Scheme seeks to establish a system to ensure fair monetary returns for their efforts in collection, primary processing, storage, packaging, transportation etc. The Scheme also seeks to provide for the sharing of revenue from the sale proceeds after deducting the cost. The scheme has been initially implemented in States having areas under schedule V for non-nationalized and abundantly available 12 MFP.

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